2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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183 other men so you will avoid your husband's suspicion," and so on.
861 Sometimes the appeal was made by a parent: "If you do such and such a thing well, I will be proud of you." In general it would seem that the positive side rather than the negative, was stressed.

777 It was more often the men informants who mentioned supernatural motives proposed for proper conduct. They remembered
867 that they were told that the Supreme Being would "have pity" on
888 them if they followed the proper code of behavior. Both men and women mentioned, however, that respect for the aged was instilled because "people didn't become old for nothing. They had a blessing from the Supreme Being to live long lives. Whenever you see old people attempting to do something and are having difficulties, you should go right in and do it for them. Help old people out and then ask them to intercede for you that you will have good health, a long life and success in all your undertakings."

867 The example of others was recognized as effective in child-
574 training. Al feels that the Gros Ventres were well brought up in the old days "because children were taught to stick to the rules and they had the good example of adults to follow." In describing the duty of hospitality, Coming Daylight said: "My grandmother was a great one to have a lot of visitors because she was generous, and so I got a good example at home." It was said by others of Coming Daylight: "She feeds everyone who comes along just as she used to see her uncle (mother's brother) do. She takes after her uncle in lots of ways."

In lecturing to the young, examples of actual behavior of persons, both good and bad, were often given. For instance, in warning boys of the evils of gambling, reference would be made to men who would otherwise have had promising careers but who ruined their chances by too heavy stakes which they lost. Fear
[754] of offending those who had supernatural power lest they retaliate by means of black magic was implicit in at least some of the admonitions. This was so, for instance, in instructing young men to stay away from the wives of "powerful" men, as well as in warning girls to decline improper proposals "in a nice way."

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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mon pipe in his hands, it was forbidden for anyone to pass in front of him, under penalty of some evil befalling the culprit.

If a person, wanting something in a hurry from the keeper, such as meat or a bit of tobacco, just poked his (or her) head in the door of the keeper's lodge and made his request, no one inside would answer him. He would have to go all the way in, proceeding clockwise, make his request, and go out clockwise, not back out.

When the co-keeper gave a visitor something to eat in the Pipe lodge, the receiver had to eat it there and not take it out, unless someone told war stories. No one was allowed to take or grab anything seen in the Pipe lodge.

The keeper and co-keeper were by virtue of their office "holy" persons, that is, endowed with supernatural powers. Some of these powers were related directly to their main task as custodians of the Pipe, leaders in its ritual, and intercessors with the supernatural world, and will be described under the ritual of the Pipe. Others were conferred on them at or subsequent to the transfer rite, partly to enable them to command the respect due them, partly to give them supernatural efficiency for their own or their people's advantage,—the former being mostly powers to harm, the latter mostly powers to help.

If anyone were guilty of disrespect to the keeper or co-keeper, there were several avenging procedures to which they could resort.

During the transfer rite, the keeper and co-keeper were taught some form of cursing, so they would be properly respected. If they wished evil on anyone, the evil would come to pass. Deer, an ex-keeper who gave Lame Bull much of the latter's coaching for the keepership, told him after his mouth had been consecrated: "Be careful what you say. For if you utter an evil wish on anybody, the wish will come true." This power, it may be added, is more or less of a piece with the commonly possessed efficacy attributed in Gros Ventre idealogy to serious good or evil wish-thought. (See pp. 364-370.)

Deer also taught Lame Bull in his early keepership another harming power, but cautioned him not to use it unless someone failed to show proper respect to him as keeper. This power worked by "sympathetic" magic. Deer asked for a little pup and a piece of sinew. When these were brought he said: "Leave the pup near

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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the door." Deer then in both hands held the sinew stretched taut horizontally over a smoldering chip and sang a song special to this rite, ending it with a recitative "Yo!" Then he lowered the sinew and repeated the song and "Yo," then lowered still more and repeated, concluding with "Yo, ho, ho, ho!" and finally put the sinew on the burning chip. As the sinew burned and buckled, the pup doubled up with cramps and died.

Another power, conferred for use by the keeper in case of disrespect committed against him, worked by "contagious" magic. The keeper watched the offender closely and made sure to locate his tracks, and then took out of the pipe bundle and put on his ritual moccasins the soles of which had been rubbed during the transfer rite with the poisonous wild parsley. Then, wearing the moccasins he stepped in the offender's tracks. As soon as he did so, the offender got a fit and then his legs and feet became weak and wobbly and nobody but the keeper could cure him.

The co-keeper for the same punitive purpose in case of disrespect or molestation carried wild parsley mixed with peppermint leaves in the sack attached to her belt, but we obtained no information on the precise procedure she used.

Two punitive procedures were told The Boy by his father but without full [illegible] These "vulgar" powers were not broadcast but were kept [illegible] or less secret within the inner circle of the Flat Pipe.

If a woman disrespected a keeper or caused him great embarrassment, he carried out a special rite over or toward her, obliged her to submit to sex intercourse with him, and afterwards carried out a concluding rite. If some young man went so far as to flirt with her, make advances and touch her, he would get ill, and she alone could doctor him back to health. If he went so far as to have sexual intercourse with her, he would probably die.

As regards all the foregoing punitive and harming powers, it was strictly understood that the keeper and co-keeper were given them to use only to enforce respect, and that if used for other and evil purposes the users would pay dearly and would be punished in some way, through the death of their children or through other misfortune.

Besides these supernatural powers to command respect, other

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"Stiffarm used to be accused of doing harm to people through his power. He would never defend himself or say anything about this. On one occasion a group were drinking whiskey and some of Stiffarm's brothers-in-law were there. Brothers-in-law joke [banter] each other. They said: 'Let's have a contest of power. The one who has the least power will buy the drinks.' But Stiffarm said: 'No. I'd rather not.' The others thought Stiffarm was a little scared. They insisted. Finally Stiffarm said: 'All right.' So he took a piece of otter skin in his fingers, held it up, sang four times, and blew on it four times. The fourth time, he blew hard and the piece of otter skin disappeared. Then he said: 'Where is that otter skin? Look for it.' They could not find it. Then Stiffarm got up, walked to the iron stove in the middle of the room, and there was the otter skin half buried in the side of the stove. Stiffarm said: 'Here it is. Come and get it.' But no one dared to do so. They were all afraid. Stiffarm then took it without effort, and said: 'Now, the Gros Ventres have blamed me for causing some deaths by using my power. That is not true. But if I really wanted to do so, I would use this otter skin, and the one I used it on would not live long.'"

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"The woman had everything, like blankets and dishes and so forth, stuffed in between the poles and covering of the lodge. The woman herself was on the ground, crawling around and making motions with her hands as if she were working at something on the ground." Coming Daylight did not know if or how the woman recovered from her derangement because shortly after camp was moved and the people scattered. 753 158

Coming Daylight gave details of another mental case, that of a young man who wandered off from camp, tore off his clothing, cut his hair off short, and came running back fast to camp. The people noticed his wild look, grabbed him, and picketed him. He was "raving mad." Later he used to go into the brush, cut sticks until he had a large bundle, and carry the bundle around with him until his death. Some people were afraid of him, but most were not. Coming Daylight did not recall his ever scaring her or her children. He would ask in a kind of pitiful way for something to eat. He would visit a while and then just rush out of the lodge or house.

Thick gave us details of one case of illness of doubtful origin. The illness had started one night when Thick and an inseparable boyhood friend of his were coming back to camp together. They were walking on a flat together, and heard behind them a sound "like somebody dragging a robe or something stiff." They thought it was a ghost and started to run. After a bit they stopped and looked back but could not see anything. They decided it must be a ghost. So they started walking again, and pretty soon they heard the same sound. Of course they then ran. Thick's friend then had a feeling as if somebody were grabbing the hair up on his head, and looked back and said: "Stop! Here is the fellow who is chasing us." 753

It was a great big owl dragging its wings. From that time on he got worse, and died soon after in 1889. Thick thought that the scare got that night brought on the illness. The doctors who treated the boy claimed he had been "doped" [bewitched] by someone. [754]

Grave or fatal illness could also be brought on by human beings, usually those with doctor power, through sheer wishing or through other procedures, or even, it seems, by human without supernaturally acquired power through concentrated wishing, as will be explained in detail later. 754

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Weasel was given power to cure only a limited number of cases; Goes Back, a medicine woman, was granted power to cure only one case and she used it to cure Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man; Al Chandler's adoptive father, also called Little Man, got power [from a coyote] to cure seven persons at the point of death, but used it in only three cases. There were no limitations ordinarily, it appears, on power to cure minor ailments; a professional doctor, Cora Chandler stated, "could do other little doctoring as often as called." 756

Doctors, as The Boy expressed it, "had to live restricted lives, to avoid doing certain things or eating certain foods, somewhat like keepers of sacred Pipes." According to Al Chandler, one was forbidden to eat buffalo heart under penalty of death, and "certain medicine men people tell about were vulnerable only in one certain spot,"—in one case the man's big toe, in another, a spot on his shoulder. This latter doctor always wore a little circle of willow wrapped with weasel skin over this spot; he was wounded badly but, until that spot on his shoulder was hit, was not killed. The donor of power might warn the recipient never to let anyone do some specific thing to him. Thus Little Man, Al Chandler's adoptive father, when he got power was warned by the supernatural donor: "Never let anyone pull your hair. Here however, is the remedy. If there is anyone present when your hair is pulled tell him to make a smudge of sweet pine, then put it near your nose, and if you can sniff it you will come through safe, otherwise you are a goner." Actually Little Man's death, as Al Chandler told it in detail, occurred shortly after a quarrel with his wife in the course of which she pulled his hair. Little Man quit fighting and sat quiet. Two or three days later he was down sick. White and Indian doctors were called in but none could do anything for him. Al Chandler went to stay with him but he did not want Al there. He wanted to die and did not want Al to talk him out of it. In a little while he was dead. 756 784

Doctors, or at least some of them, got power not only to cure but also to cause sickness and to kill, poison or otherwise harm people. Some other doctors were believed to have used such lethal power, although such use was definitely looked upon as a crime 754

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754 to be avenged and also entailed supernatural punishment. As The Boy put it, if a medicine man were not "a strong man, an ideal man, he might resort to this killing power he had. But he would pay dearly for doing so, because for everyone he killed in this way he would pay by the death of one of his children or relatives, and finally by his own life." According to Singer, "if a person knew who had 'shot' him, he would want to get even with him. If someone put medicine on another, he [the killer] would have to pay for this deed by losing one of his relatives, such as a child or grandchild, through death. It was not good to do that [kill by medicine] because he [the killer] always had so to pay."

Good Singer, when on one occasion she cured Singer's husband, named the person who had caused his illness. Singer herself was once cured of an illness by White Weasel. The latter told her that "it was not a spirit that had shot her but it was a living human being, but he did not mention the person's name." Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, at one time suffered severely, until cured by a medicine woman, Goes Back, from pain near the heart and from hemorrhages. "He and everybody knew that a certain bad man had caused the illness by putting medicine on him. Goes Back told him that this man had done so because he thought Little Man was going after his [this man's] wife or going with her."

Mary Ereaux recalled and reported one such case involving a cousin of hers whom a medicine man wanted to marry. The girl's great-grandmother would not let the girl go. The girl died, "poisoned," it was believed, by the medicine man, and he himself died soon after.

There was a good deal of fear among the people of such evil supernatural power but so far as we could gather, not the pervading widespread ever-present dread and suspicion of witchcraft that are found, say, among some of the Indian peoples of the southwest. Apparently most doctors who had power to harm seldom or never used it. Various instances of such use were told us, but they all were attributed to only two or three of the many doctors known to our informants. And one of these two or three was specifically described as "a goodhearted man who helped the poor and all that even though he would harm you on the sly but always in some way the truth would leak out."

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A doctor with power to harm might use it if he were "jealous of someone better at medicine than himself," or if he "didn't like someone," or if "a woman refused to live with him."

We got very little information, and this from only two informants, The Boy and Thomas Main, on how and from whom power to do evil was obtained. According to Thomas Main "bad medicine could be acquired sleeping up on the hills, and was used to do evil." The Boy gave a few more details. "Most of the time power to do evil was gotten by fasting and sleeping on the hills and mountains. It was gotten from some animal or other creature. The animal would teach the recipient how to exercise the power and would also tell him: 'If anyone makes you mad and does not respect you, do so and so and harm him.' It was hard to tell who had evil power, until they exercised it." In at least some cases, then, power to harm was given the recipient of other power, as in the case of keepers and co-keepers of sacred Pipes (cf. pp. 52, 60-61), to enforce respect for the recipient. Whether power to harm was always given for this purpose incidentally to the giving of other power, we were not sure. If we assume that this was not the case, and if sheer power to bewitch could be gotten independently, a logical conflict with the fundamental Gros Ventre conception of supernatural power emerges. For all power was conceived as coming ultimately from the benevolent Supreme Being (cf. supra, pp. 5, 7). We do not, however, press the point. While the Gros Ventre magico-religious belief system was a remarkably consistent one, especially as described by The Boy, one hundred per cent consistency is another matter. After all, gifts of power, even though ultimately from the Supreme Being, were gifts with a string, namely, shortened life to the recipients. The Supreme Being preferred prayer to power-quest (supra, pp. 264-266). The problem is here presented and discussed; it has not been solved by us.

Most doctors had to have some mastery of legerdemain. In the everyday exercise of their curing powers an integral feature, for example, was extracting from the patient's body the object that was causing the disease. Some doctors, in addition, quite independently of their medical practice, had special abilities of clair-

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In the preceding pages we have been concerned with the ritual procedures used in the exercise of curing power, of "good" doctoring power. We now turn to procedures used for working "bad" power, for doing harm to people putting spells on them, "shooting" them, in a word, for practicing witchcraft. Our information on such procedures is much less detailed than we would desire, for those who resorted to the use of such "bad" power did so secretly as a rule and were very reticent about their procedures. Furthermore, so far as we could judge, "bad" power was less frequently used than "good" power.

Bad medicine could be put on the victim by sheer wishing. Singer referred to one very powerful medicine man as "being able to just wish somebody dead." The victim would be "poisoned" at a distance by the medicine man. As Al Chandler explained the matter:

"There were some bad medicine men who had medicine that could poison you without their touching you or associating with you, no matter how far away they might be from you, even two miles. They wanted to do something to you or to somebody you loved. Then you or your loved one got sick all of a sudden. That was considered a crime. This medicine man may have had it in for you for some reason, jealousy or something like that, and he would poison you. He would just sit in his lodge and perform there and say whom he was doing this to, and this person would get sick or something would happen to him. . . . Some medicine man could poison you without touching you."

The bad medicine man would commonly operate by "shooting" the victim, that is, by projecting some object into the victim's body. Singer was once so "shot" with a finger nail, Coming Daylight's husband, Little Man, with a bit of rag (supra, p. 341). "One man's medicine," according to Thomas Main, "was a sand burr. He could wish it to go a long way off and lodge in a man's throat, and the man would die after a while."

Failures and Skepticism

Failures by doctors to cure were apparently quite common. We were told incidentally of a number of cases. We obtained no in-

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828 through the winter what to put in the letter (quoted infra, pp. 380-381) sent in the spring of 1943 to Cooper that would do something big toward restoring the latter to health. "'I think,'" remarked Thomas Main, "is commonly used by the Gros Ventres in speaking. When I am interpreting, a man will often say to me: 'Tell them this is what I *think* of him (or it).' There is an emphasis on thinking and on the power of thought."

We come now to the more specific data on good and bad wishing and thinking.

754 828 In 1939 while we were chatting about approbrious and insulting terms, such as tsë:k (you ghost), in common use, The Boy distinguished these from malevolent thinking or wishing or cursing proper. "As a curse [proper] a person might say to another: 'You are not going to live long.' If a thing were serious enough, almost anyone might worry another with such cursing." On another occasion, the same summer, while speaking of the kinds of advice given children by their father, The Boy quoted his father, Lame Bull, as having said: "If a man were offended by his son and put a curse on his son, the curse would remain on the child."

828 [123] Between our 1939 and 1940 visits to the Gros Ventres, The Boy had suffered a severe stroke (facial paralysis). At our first talk with him in 1940, Cooper expressed to him the very sincere wish that he would get well and live long. The Boy was visibly affected by this expression and spoke at some length as follows:

[626] "If a man does something of which the people disapprove very much, their *thought* is against him. They *think* badly of him. Against this mass thinking his own thinking cannot stand. Two people may have a battle of thinking. The outcome will depend on how each is developed in thinking, on their respective powers of thought. If all the people think badly of a man he becomes a sort of outcast.

"If someone has had some terrible misfortune and is beyond human aid and this becomes known, people will say: 'That is his sentence from above. Someone above thought that out. That is why he is in such desperate straits.' This would be something supernatural, something beyond the human.

"When you said you wished and thought I would live many years

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I was glad. Now your wish and thought are added to my own. 828
The human being can think and reason because somebody supernatural has endowed him with the right [ability] to think. The wishing itself helps."

A few minutes later, after he had told a recent dream he had had, he voluntarily returned to the wish topic. "When a little while ago you wished that I would get well and live long, I believe that at that moment in which you wished this the Supreme Being was listening to you and saw your thought and knew all about it. In my opinion besides your thinking that way as just a human being, your so thinking calls for some action from above.

"Take another example. Suppose I did something good to an old man, and the old man valued and appreciated it. I would not know he was pleased until he said: 'You have made my heart glad. I appreciate what you have done for me. Stand in front of me. I am going to ask in your behalf from the power above that allowed me to live this long. I am asking with my words, my prayer, my thought, my wish, for all I am worth. And all this wish has to be transferred to you."

In 1945 Thomas Main after a long and serious discussion with 626
The Boy and Thick on this matter of mass thinking and public 754●
opinion, summarized the situation as follows: 828

"The Indian people, at least the Gros Ventres, thought the psychological effect of public opinion is so great and intense on the one on whom it was trained that it shortened his life . . and made him a nobody. If he had a long, long life it was certainly a miserable one. It was definitely known by the Gros Ventres that they actually thought people to death. Even today public opinion is difficult to cope with. The Boy says that if public opinion held anyone in high esteem, this would have the opposite effect and would help the person to climb the heights he wanted to attain. One who was not held in high esteem by public opinion never got anywhere in any endeavor." We may comment in passing that while there is question here of the ordinary operation of public opinion, mass thinking also seems to enter in: "They actually thought people to death."

In the following account by Charles Buckman the wish appears

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828 pretty clearly to be operative on its own although along with the
754 "natural" morale-building effect of cheering words.
626

"There is an old Gros Ventre saying that if a man is ailing and some relative or friend of his comes in and says pleasant things to him or tells him he is going to get well, such a talk helps him. When someone gives the sick person a good talk and sincerely wishes he will get well, then the patient will do his best and get well. If you say unpleasant things to a sick man you will help to kill him. Don't hurt a sick man's feelings. The wish in the case is looked upon as something like a prayer. It has to be really meant. When a person talks that way to you when you are sick, [782] the Supreme Being will look down upon you and help you to get well. If a person is visiting a sick Indian, he will say good things to you, even though he knows you are going to die. A white doctor might say: 'There is not much hope.'

"When 32 years ago I was thought to be dying of appendicitis and had been given up by the doctors, old fellows came in and talked hopefully to me and put new life in me.

"In 1918, when I was ill with the flu, I overheard the doctor say: 'It is only a question of a half-hour. You better get a coffin for him.' Then another fellow, an Indian, came in and said to me: 'Well, what did the doctor tell you?' I said: 'Nothing.' He then said: 'He told that fellow over there that you are going to die. But he is not the governor of death. You are not going to die. You are going to live. You want to live for these children of yours. You are going to get well, and for the sake of these children. And think of the One Above [Supreme Being]. He's going to keep you. That's all I want to say to you. I wish you will be up in a few days.' And he walked out. It took me two years to recover fully."

In one of the songs, No. 67, sung in the Law Enforcers' Dance, the words, "The lead bull, comes in this direction," were explained [782] to us by The Boy as being a "half prayer." The singer was "wishing as hard as he could, so there would be plenty of game, especially buffalo, so the people would not have to go far to hunt."

525 The Gros Ventre, The Boy stated in 1939, "did not pray for
828 success in gambling," but just before a wheel game started, the player would take the wheel in his hand and hold one of the